

THE BEST ENVIRONMENTAL
CHOICE IN SEAFOOD



MSC Ecolabel User Guide

January 2013



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1. Introduction

The Marine Stewardship Council's fishery certification program and seafood ecolabel recognise and reward sustainable fishing.

The distinctive blue ecolabel gives consumers confidence that they are choosing seafood products which are traceable and have been sourced from independently certified fisheries. Before seafood can be sold with the ecolabel, businesses in the supply chain must have undertaken a traceability audit to meet the MSC Chain of Custody standard.

A range of potential benefits

Using the MSC ecolabel brings a range of potential benefits to any company in the supply chain, helping it to stand out from competitors and attract new customers. Many of the world's leading retailers and seafood brands have placed the MSC at the centre of their sustainable seafood policies.

The MSC ecolabel is also used by certified fisheries, media organisations and many others to communicate support for the MSC program.

Rules governing MSC ecolabel use

As a certification mark and trademark, strict rules govern the display of the MSC ecolabel, both on-product and off-product.

It is in the interest of all users to follow this guide, so that the ecolabel retains its integrity and value.

The guide sets out the rules governing the use of the label and explains how different users – fisheries, supply chain organisations, retailers, restaurants, caterers, non-commercial organisations and the media – can ensure that public awareness of the thousands of products the ecolabel appears on around the world continues to grow.

The MSC mission

The MSC mission is to use our ecolabel and fishery certification program to contribute to the health of the world's oceans by recognising and rewarding sustainable fishing practices, influencing the choices people make when buying seafood, and working with our partners to transform the seafood market to a sustainable basis.

The Marine Stewardship Council is an independent, global, non-profit organisation.

Image right:

McDonald's commitment to source from certified sustainable fisheries means 13 million consumers across 39 countries in Europe can now buy MSC labelled Filet-O-Fish.



Image far right:

Mars Petcare launched its first MSC labelled Whiskas and Sheba products in Europe made from 100 per cent MSC certified fish off-cuts.



2. MSC ecolabel ownership

The MSC owns the trademark of the ecolabel, the abbreviation 'MSC', and its name 'Marine Stewardship Council'.

The MSC reserves all rights in relation to these trademarks. Only organisations that have signed a formal written agreement with the MSC – the Ecolabel Licence Agreement – may display the MSC ecolabel.

The ecolabel cannot be displayed without the prior written consent of the MSC. Permission to display it does not transfer or license any intellectual property rights to others. The ecolabel can only be used after an agreement has been signed.

Unauthorised display is prohibited and will be treated as a trademark infringement. The MSC reserves the right to take legal action against any party that reproduces or copies the MSC name without prior authorisation.

Ecolabel Licence Agreement

This is for displaying the MSC ecolabel on a seafood product or menu item, and associated promotional materials, such as a website. Organisations that sign an Ecolabel Licence Agreement are liable to pay annual fees and, depending on the ecolabel application, royalties.

Fees and reporting

The MSC will request a completed turnover declaration on a quarterly, twice-yearly or annual basis depending on how much MSC labelled seafood is sold. This information allows the MSC to calculate the annual fees and royalties.

More information about how much it costs to use the MSC ecolabel is available at:
www.msc.org/get-certified/ecolabel-costs

Artwork sign-off

Once permission to use the MSC ecolabel has been granted, organisations must submit artwork proofs to the MSC before printing, publishing or displaying the ecolabel.



3. How to obtain a copy of the MSC ecolabel

Print-ready artwork files in high resolution must be submitted for the ecolabel requirements to be verified.



The MSC ecolabel is only released as part of the approval process set out below. The ecolabel must not be forwarded to any third parties, except designers creating packaging or associated promotional materials.

Six steps to using the MSC ecolabel

1. Sign an Ecolabel Licence Agreement with the MSC

You can apply for an Ecolabel Licence Agreement by emailing ecolabel@msc.org

Once confirmed, the MSC can provide you with a high-resolution copy of the ecolabel in any of the following formats: JPG, TIFF, AI, EPS, BMP.

2. Add the MSC ecolabel to materials

Incorporate the MSC ecolabel and associated items into the design of your materials, following the guidelines in this document.

3. Submit proofs for approval

To avoid material needing to be recalled, submit the following **before** printing or using publicly:

- Colour proofs of all materials carrying the MSC ecolabel, preferably in PDF format.
If this is packaging please send the final draft design of the entire pack.
- A completed approval form, which can also be obtained from ecolabel@msc.org

4. Get approval

Once design has been agreed, the MSC will send you written approval of the ecolabel use. Only at this stage should you print your materials.

5. Send materials to the MSC

Once printed, send samples of the MSC labelled materials to the MSC Head Office at Marine House (see back cover for address).

6. Product is added to the MSC's website

Once approved, the MSC will promote your product on its website's "Sustainable seafood product finder" www.msc.org/product-finder.

Please provide a 600 x 600 pixel jpeg image of your product.

Correct use of the MSC ecolabel will speed up the approval process. Please ensure that all design agencies and other service providers who work with the MSC ecolabel have a copy of this guide.

4. The MSC ecolabel

This section provides a guide to the use of the MSC ecolabel, including information on colour, size and positioning.



Elements of the ecolabel

The following requirements apply to all uses of the label. Any deviation in colour, font or design will lessen its effectiveness and could result in legal consequences associated with trademark infringements.

The MSC ecolabel comprises six elements, which may not be separated from each other or altered in any way.

A – ‘Certified sustainable seafood’

This phrase communicates the meaning of the MSC ecolabel.

B – MSC initials

The letters MSC are the abbreviation of the Marine Stewardship Council, the owner of the ecolabel.

C – www.msc.org

The MSC’s website address must always be displayed in its whole form, as shown here.

D – White keyline

The white line which outlines the fish checkmark and the ecolabel as a whole must always be displayed. No other colour may be used.

E – TM

The ecolabel must be directly accompanied by a TM. The letters TM indicate that this ecolabel is a trademark. Registration of the MSC trademark is already approved in many countries.

F – Fish checkmark

The oval shape forms the pictorial part of the ecolabel and illustrates a fish body that incorporates a checkmark, or tick.

4. The MSC ecolabel *continued*

Formats

The MSC ecolabel is available in two formats: a landscape (horizontal) format and a portrait (vertical) format.

Both formats may be displayed and it is possible for the same user to display one format of the MSC ecolabel on one application and the other format on a different application.

Landscape (horizontal)



Portrait (vertical)



Colour

Pantone 286

CMYK 100 60 0 2

RGB 0 93 170

Hex #005daa

Monotone

The MSC ecolabel is also available in black and white for circumstances where the packaging is black and white, or the same Pantone blue. In these instances, the ecolabel must print in solid black and white only, never in grey-scale. These exceptions are agreed at the discretion of the MSC.

Size

Minimum size

The minimum size for on-product applications of the landscape (horizontal) ecolabel is **10mm** (measured from the base to the top of the left-hand side). The minimum size for the portrait (vertical) ecolabel is **14mm** (measured from side to side at the top).

Minimum size requirements for bulk packaging are **20mm** and **28mm**, respectively.

Maximum size

There is no maximum size restriction for display of the MSC ecolabel or its variations, either on-product or off-product.

Translations

Translations of the phrase 'certified sustainable seafood' are already available in over 20 languages. If a new translation is required this must be carried out by the MSC.

Minimum size requirements



Landscape format

On-product: 10mm

Bulk packaging: 20mm



Portrait format

On-product: 14mm

Bulk packaging: 28mm

5. Who can use the MSC ecolabel?

Any commercial or non-commercial organisation can apply to use the MSC ecolabel.

Supply chain companies

Processors, distributors, foodservice suppliers and wholesalers that sell MSC certified seafood in bulk or in consumer-ready packaging. Please see pages 7-8 for use of the MSC ecolabel on product.



© A Estay / MSC

Foodservice

Businesses that serve MSC certified seafood that is 'ready to eat' and can be consumed immediately, either on the premises or as a take-away. Please see page 9 for use of the MSC ecolabel on menus.



© Firstpix / MSC

Retailers

Shops and stores that sell MSC certified third-party branded products and private-label products to consumers, including online retailers and fishmongers. For MSC ecolabel use at fish counters please see page 10. For off-product use see page 11.



© MSC

Non-commercial organisations

Non-profit and public sector organisations that want to promote their support of the MSC program. Please see page 11 for off-product use of the MSC ecolabel.



© MSC

Certified fisheries

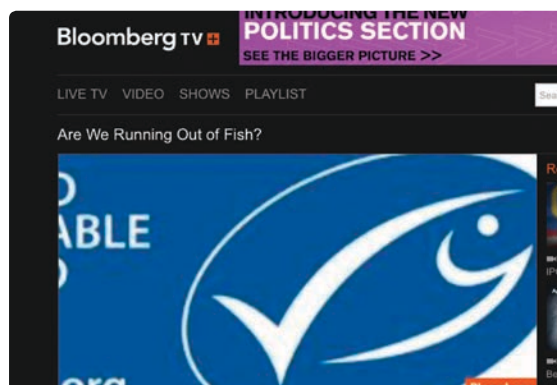
The fishery client and those represented by the fishery client. Please contact ecolabel@msc.org.



© J Simpson / MSC

Media

Media organisations that publish news and features about the MSC. Please see www.msc.org.



© Bloomberg

6. On-product use

‘On-product’ refers to the display of the MSC ecolabel on products to indicate that a seafood item comes from an MSC certified sustainable fishery.

This includes bulk packaging, caterers’ pricelists and catalogues used in a business-to-business context.

Position

The MSC ecolabel must appear on the front of the packaging to ensure it is immediately visible to consumers.

Packaging example

Species name

Ecolabel on front of packaging

The MSC claim

The MSC Chain of Custody code next to the ecolabel

The MSC claim close to the ecolabel

Ingredients: filling (66%): fish (33%) (pollock, smoked haddock, salmon), béchamel sauce (33%) (contains: milk, double cream, water, white onion, butter, cornflour, salt, pepper, roasted garlic), diced potato (17%), cheddar cheese, capers, wholegrain mustard (contains: mustard, vinegar, salt, sugar, spices), parsley (0.9%), lemon juice, lemon zest, vegetable oil.

Pastry: wheat flour, water, butter, vegetable suet, cornflour salt, pasteurised free range egg.

Topping/sprinkle: cheddar cheese and dried parsley. **Edible Label:** potato starch. **Contains:** wheat, gluten, egg, fish, milk and mustard. May contain traces of celery and sesame seeds. May also contain some fish bones.

Fish content in pie: pollock 10%, smoked haddock 7%, salmon 6%

Nutritional information

Typical values	per 100g	per pie
energy kj	1030	2781
kcal	246	664
protein	9.1g	24.6g
carbohydrate	21.3g	57.5g
total fat	13.6g	36.7g
saturates	8.1g	21.9g
mono-unsaturates	4.2g	11.4g
salt	0.3g	0.8g
sodium	0.8g	2.1g

Reheating instructions

Remove all packaging and place on a baking tray into a pre-heated oven.

Fresh 180°C • 160°C fan • 350°F • Gas mark 4
⌚ 25 mins

From frozen
Defrost thoroughly in the refrigerator
Follow cooking instructions for fresh pies

Storage instructions

Keep refrigerated below 5°C, suitable for home freezing. Freeze on day of purchase. Use within three days of defrosting. ~~Do not refreeze.~~
~~Do not microwave.~~

Why not look us up at www.pieminister.co.uk you can join the v.i.pie club to receive news and offers by email, you can even buy our pies online. If you have anything to tell us, please write to us at info@pieminister.co.uk or to our address below.

PMHQ
24 Stokes Croft
Bristol
BS1 3PR
www.pieminister.co.uk

recycle box and compost plastic window

CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD MSC
www.msc.org
MML-C-1468

The MSC claim

When the MSC ecolabel is used on product, it must always be accompanied by the MSC claim. The claim explains and substantiates the MSC ecolabel and is available in five versions:

Version 1

“Thank you for choosing seafood that has met the MSC’s global standard for sustainability. Together we can help protect fish stocks for the future. www.msc.org”

Version 2

“This product comes from a fishery that has been independently certified to the MSC’s standard for a well-managed and sustainable fishery. www.msc.org”

Version 3

“The [insert seafood species] in this product comes from a fishery that has been independently certified to the MSC’s standard for a well-managed and sustainable fishery. www.msc.org”

Version 4

“This seafood has met the MSC’s global standard for sustainability. www.msc.org”

Version 5

“From an MSC certified sustainable fishery. www.msc.org”

Translations of the MSC claim are available at www.msc.org/get-certified/ecolabel-claim.

The MSC Chain of Custody code

Every MSC labelled product carries a unique Chain of Custody code featuring a sequence of letters and numbers that refer to the producer of the product. It shall be displayed next to the MSC ecolabel or MSC claim and should be readable.

This code underpins the traceability of the MSC Chain of Custody and ecolabelling program, and it must be displayed to validate use of the MSC ecolabel. The code will be provided by your certifier or supplier, or you can contact the MSC for advice.

6. On-product use *continued*

Additional requirements

Apart from showing the correct seafood species, MSC ecolabel, Chain of Custody code and MSC claim there are no other MSC requirements for product labelling.

If other information related to a certified fishery or the MSC is mentioned (e.g. FAO region, fishing method), the MSC will check the information according to the certification report issued by the certifier. The MSC is not responsible for validating any additional claims.

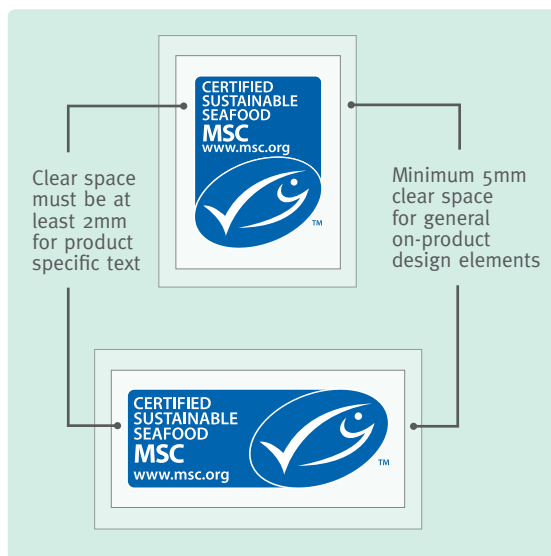
Images of non-certified species or unassociated fishing activity cannot be displayed on product packaging.

The responsibility for adhering to national and international food standards and labelling guidelines rests solely with the owner of the product packaging.

Trade names

The product name should not refer to non-certified species. Under some circumstances exceptions to this rule may be made on application to the MSC (e.g. 'Imitation Crab' for surimi products). The name of the product must not be misrepresentative to buyers or consumers.

For information on format, colour and size of the ecolabel please refer to page 5.



Exclusion zone

When the ecolabel is produced at its minimum size, the clear space around it must be at least 2mm for product-specific text (such as species, weight, ingredients) where the text does not lead to a connection between the MSC and any other organisation. Clear space must be at least 5mm for general packaging design elements (such as brand names, logos etc) where the MSC ecolabel could be associated with the host brand.

When the ecolabel is reproduced at larger sizes it must be surrounded by clear space at 10 per cent of the ecolabel height (portrait format) or width (landscape format).

Multipack rules

The MSC ecolabel may not appear on the outer packaging of a multipack product if one of the individual packs contains non-certified seafood. There is a specific version of the MSC ecolabel – the multipack mark – available on request.



A – The multipack mark may be included in the outer packaging but must not appear on the front.

B – The blue oval may be used on the front of the packaging next to the name of the MSC certified product or species.

The Chain of Custody code shall be displayed next to the multipack mark on the outer packaging. The individual packs inside must show the standard MSC ecolabel and follow the on-product rules set out in this guide.

7. On-menu use

‘On-menu’ refers to the display of the MSC ecolabel on menus, usually by restaurants or caterers. There is a specific version of the MSC ecolabel available for on-menu use that can be requested from the MSC.



The oval and full ecolabel with explanatory text

A – The blue oval can be placed next to listed dishes on a menu. The seafood content in each dish indicated must be over 95 per cent MSC certified seafood.

B – The full ecolabel with explanatory text must also be printed on the menu.

Neither ecolabel may be redrawn, distorted or altered in any way from the original master artwork.

Other requirements

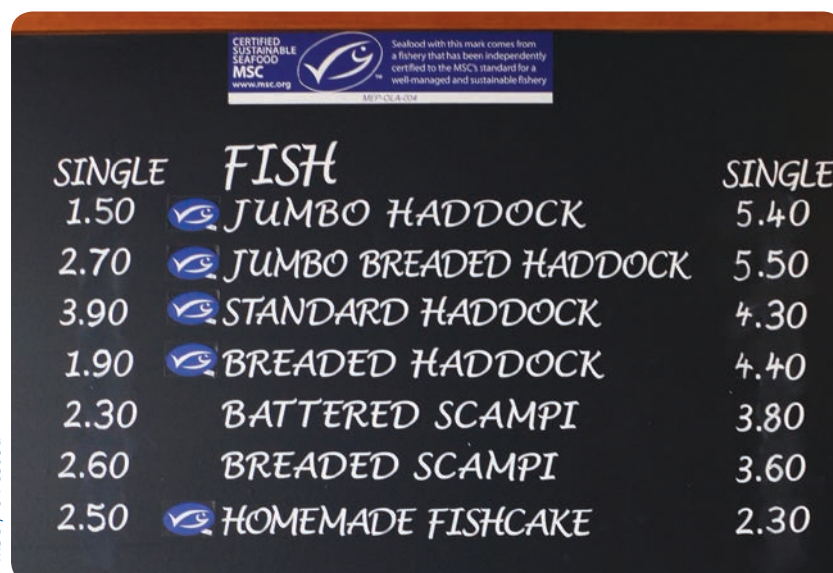
The Chain of Custody code of the restaurant or caterer needs to appear next to the full ecolabel.

For information on colour of the ecolabel please refer to page 5.

Size and proportions

The full ecolabel is a complete entity and should not be broken up or tilted from its axis. The minimum size of the full ecolabel is 15mm (measured from the base to the top of the left-hand side).

Menu example



8. Fish counter use

Specific rules apply when the MSC ecolabel is used at fresh fish counters in retailers or independent fishmongers.

Price tags

The MSC ecolabel and the Chain of Custody code of the retailer or independent fishmonger must be applied to all price tags displaying MSC certified fish in one of the following ways:

- By printing the ecolabel on price tags
- By using clips that are attached to price tags
- By using a sticker on price tags
- By using fish tags.

Accompanying material

A poster or display stand needs to be positioned at the fish counter displaying:

- The MSC ecolabel
- The MSC claim “Seafood with this mark comes from a fishery which has been independently certified to the MSC’s standard for a well-managed and sustainable fishery. www.msc.org”
- The Chain of Custody code of the retailer or independent fishmonger.

Use of fish tags

In some instances seafood companies may decide to produce fish products that are identified as MSC certified by using tags, bands or similar marks, rather than enclosing the product in packaging.

The company making the fish tags will need to prove to the MSC and its certifier that the tag conforms to the MSC’s definition of consumer ready and tamper proof* packaging. The tag must either be impossible to remove or for single use only.

The MSC will require:

- A clear statement of all intended uses of the tagged product.
- A physical example of the tag, band or mark for approval. If an example is not available, a high-resolution photo can be supplied but the MSC will require evidence of the tag’s robustness.

Each fish tag should display:

- The species name
- The MSC ecolabel with the letters TM
- The Chain of Custody code of the company attaching the tag, band or mark to the product
- A version of the MSC claim (see page 7).

The fish tag must be applied to a clearly visible part of the product.

The company making the fish tag will also be liable for paying royalty fees to the MSC.

As a consumer-facing product, the product can then be sold by a retailer without the retailer needing to have MSC Chain of Custody certification.

For information on format, colour and size of the ecolabel please refer to page 5.

* **Consumer ready and tamper proof:** Any item for presentation to the ultimate consumer consisting of a foodstuff and its packaging, where the content cannot be altered without opening or irreversibly changing the packaging. (Adapted from the MSC Certification Requirements)



© Kaufland

Fish counter example



© KDSFF

Fish tag example

9. Off-product use

‘Off-product’ refers to the use of the MSC ecolabel and promotional mark to promote Chain of Custody certification, availability of MSC labelled seafood or support for the MSC program.

Promotional material

Promotional material can only display the MSC ecolabel if the products being advertised are covered by Chain of Custody certification, display the ecolabel and have previously been approved by the MSC. Examples include advertising or point-of-sale materials, vehicles, staff uniforms, print materials (including price lists, educational leaflets, books), web pages and apps.



© MSC / A Hickman

The MSC ecolabel and supporting text

If a company's materials refer to **MSC certified products only**, or **all seafood** sold by the company is MSC labelled, the ecolabel can be used on its own.

If a company sells MSC certified **and** non-certified seafood, or publishes materials that refer to both MSC certified and non-certified seafood, **supporting text** (see box below) must be used with the MSC ecolabel to make it clear to consumers which products are MSC certified.

When the ecolabel is used for promotional use with supporting text, the text must be clearly associated with the MSC ecolabel. As a general guideline the text must be adjacent to and twice the size of the ecolabel. Where there is 100 per cent MSC certified seafood the supporting text can be any size.

Font style and colour

The font style and colour of the text may be chosen by the licensee. To match the MSC ecolabel font style use Myriad Pro Semi-bold. To match the blue colour please use PMS286.

Clear space

When the ecolabel is produced at its minimum size, the clear space around it should be at least 5mm for general packaging design elements (e.g. brand names, other logos, etc.).

Other requirements

The Chain of Custody code – if it exists – of the company promoting the products needs to be displayed.

For information on format, colour and size of the ecolabel please refer to page 5.

Supporting text

Organisations displaying the ecolabel for **promotional use** may develop their own wording to accompany it, providing they submit this to the MSC for approval. Approved wording is:

Proud supporters of the MSC



Look for the MSC ecolabel



Ask us which of our seafood is



All of our [insert species] is MSC certified



Promotional Mark

The MSC's promotional mark is available for off-product display by all user groups, as an alternative to the ecolabel with supporting text (above). The promotional mark may include the organisation's logo.



Your approved message here

www.msc.org



Your approved message here

PARTNER
LOGO

www.msc.org

10. Incorrect and misleading usage

Incorrect ecolabel usage

Do not change the colours of the MSC ecolabel.



Do not print over the MSC ecolabel.



Do not alter the design, lock-up, or separate the elements of the MSC ecolabel.



Do not display the MSC Corporate logo.



Do not distort the shape of the MSC ecolabel.



Do not tilt the MSC ecolabel.



Misleading use

Users must ensure that the MSC ecolabel and Marine Stewardship Council name are never displayed in a way that:

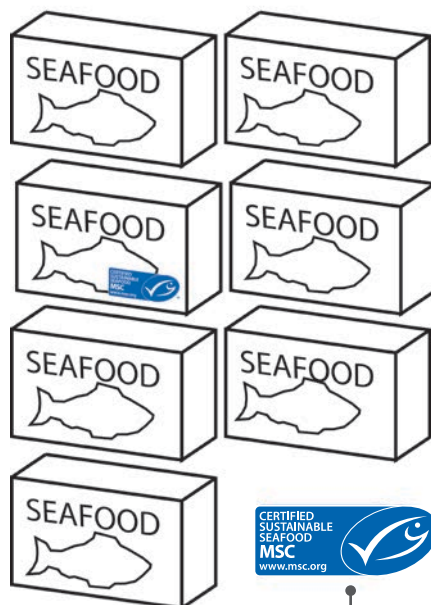
- Confuses consumers as to the association of the MSC with other brands or logos
- Suggests or implies that non-certified seafood is MSC certified
- Creates an association with products that are not from a fishery certified to the MSC standard.

The MSC ecolabel should only appear next to certified products. In other words, when using the ecolabel where there is a mix of MSC certified and non-MSC certified products you need to clearly identify which are MSC certified.

The MSC reserves the right to refuse any proposed use of the ecolabel it feels is inappropriate. The licensee must act, and must ensure that the ecolabel shall be used, consistently with the MSC's objectives and policies. As such, the use of the ecolabel shall not cause any harm or prejudice to the reputation, image or prestige of the MSC.

Incorrect off-product use

ADVERTISEMENT



If using in an off-product environment refrain from placing the ecolabel in a position which could be misleading to consumers as to which products are MSC certified and which are not.

11. Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the use of the MSC ecolabel, we will be delighted to assist.

For further information please contact:

Ecolabel Licensing Team
ecolabel@msc.org

Please visit the following link to find the relevant commercial manager for your region:

www.msc.org/about-us/offices-staff/msc-staff

Accompanying policies can be found on the website:

www.msc.org/get-certified/use-the-msc-ecolabel

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Registered charity: 1066806

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Registered charity: 1066806

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Non-profit status 501 (c)(3)

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www.msc.org/product-finder
fb.com/MSCecolabel
[@MSCecolabel](https://www.instagram.com/MSCecolabel)

Designed by Forster.

Participation in MSC's certification program changes over time; all details within this document are accurate at the time of publication.

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